



RICE | BUSINESS

VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE



APRIL 21-22, 2023

JONES GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | MCNAIR HALL, RICE UNIVERSITY

AGENDA

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Check in & Breakfast	Rotunda & Shell Auditorium
9:00 – 9:20 AM	Welcome: Dean Peter Rodriguez	Shell Auditorium
9:20 AM – 12:30 PM	VBB Pitches Chipytics Clifford Distilling Rannsak Martini Mates Designegy Outmore Living CarTwin Pretty Thai Brand	Shell Auditorium
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch & Networking	Anderson Family Commons
1:30 – 4:40 PM	VBB Pitches accel-EQ Dextral Phalanx Native Parlay Protocol NVIS Arden Filmocracy	Shell Auditorium
4:50 – 5:00 PM	Finalists Announced	Anderson Family Commons
5:00 – 6:00 PM	Post-Event Social	Anderson Family Commons

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Check in & Breakfast	Rotunda & Shell Auditorium
8:30 – 8:45 AM	Honor-Level Sponsor Presentations	Shell Auditorium
8:45 – 9:30 AM	Lending Panel: What You Need to Know as Your Business Takes on Debt	Shell Auditorium
9:45 – 10:30 AM	Equity Panel: Assess Your Value and Know the Risks and Rewards	Shell Auditorium
10:45 – 11:15 AM	Keynote Speaker: Mike Brown	Shell Auditorium
11:15 AM – 12:00 PM	Entrepreneurship Roundtable: Lessons from the Field	Shell Auditorium
12:00 – 2:00 PM	Lunch & Business Showcase	Anderson Family Commons
2:15 – 4:30 PM	Top 5 Finalist Pitches	Shell Auditorium
4:30 – 6:00 PM	Awards Reception	Baker Hall Dore Commons



PANELISTS

LENDING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AS YOUR BUSINESS TAKES ON DEBT

Moderated by **Mark Winchester**, Deputy District Director, U.S. Small Business Association – Houston, Navy veteran

- **Shelley Ewart**, Senior Vice President of Comerica Bank
- **Gary Henderson**, EVP of Stellar Bank
- **Sheila Patterson**, Vice President Commercial Lending of Wallis State Bank
- **Kelley Simmons**, Senior Vice President, Amegy Bank

EQUITY: ASSESS YOUR VALUE AND KNOW THE RISKS AND REWARDS

Moderated by **Tim Hsia**, Founder and Managing Partner of Context Ventures, Army veteran

- **Scott Davis**, Director of Veteran Entrepreneurship at PenFed Credit Union
- **Brad Harrison**, Founder and Managing Partner of Scout Ventures, Army veteran
- **Brandon Shelton**, Founder and Managing Partner at Task Force X Capital Management, Army veteran
- **Alexandra Wilde**, Partner in Energy, M&A and Private Equity at Jones Day

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Moderated by **Austin Hill**, Co-Founder, Managing Director at Seed Round Capital, Army veteran

- **Kirt Anderson**, CEO of Libre Manufacturing, 2022 VBB Finalist, Army veteran
- **Chris Briley**, Founder and President of Ride For Your Flag, Founder and CEO of Mustang Valley Concrete, Marine Corps veteran
- **Mike Brown**, Entrepreneur, Angel Investor, Founder of Unbreakable Wealth, Navy veteran
- **Theresa Irving**, Duneberry Farms Owner, Producer for VETtoCEO program with Warrior Rising, Air Force veteran

GUEST SPEAKERS



SCOTT DAVIS

DIRECTOR OF VETERAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP, VEIP

Scott Davis joined the PenFed Foundation in September 2022 as the director of veteran entrepreneurship for the Veteran Entrepreneur Investment Program (VEIP). He is devoted to inspiring, educating and connecting military veteran entrepreneurs to resources, individuals and organizations that enable success. Scott helps bring clarity to the elusive process of accessing capital via development, relationships and funding. His work focuses on fortifying the veteran entrepreneur community and

bringing world-class talent together in this rapidly growing ecosystem. Scott previously worked at Hivers and Strivers, a venture capital fund that exclusively invests in veteran-led companies. He also managed technology transfer for the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), and co-founded Natural Bridges, a marketing and sales company that specializes in the development and advancement of green technologies. Scott has a bachelor's degree in economics and an MBA from UNCW. He completed his master's in marketing at the University of Valencia.



TERRY CLANCY

NPD PROJECT MANAGER AT SLB, LCDR USCG, RET.

Terry Clancy grew up across Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and New Mexico and graduated from Texas A&M University with two degrees in aerospace engineering. Before joining the Coast Guard Reserve in 2003, he started working at NASA's Johnson Space Center in 1997 and navigated a successful career as a shuttle flight controller for 15 years planning missions to the ISS and low Earth orbit. Terry worked on the next generation crew return vehicle program with Boeing, Lockheed Martin

and Northrup-Grumman. He earned his MBA in 2010 from the University of Houston-Victoria, finishing the last coursework while deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba with the CG Maritime Security detachment. He currently works at SLB, an oil field services company where he manages projects for new product development of pressure-containing equipment for drilling operations. Seeking alternate methods to provide high quality products is key to some development projects and he uses his various backgrounds in project management, engineering and material science to leverage new technologies. Terry is co-sponsor of the newly formed SLB Veteran Employee Resource Group with Nick Tran. He has been the lead on the SLB Veteran Empowerment Team's Flags for the Fallen for the last several years mobilizing over a 100+ SLB veterans, employees and family members to honor those in the Houston National Cemetery on Memorial Day.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



NATE BOYER

MERGING VETS AND PLAYERS (MVP)

In addition to being a former active-duty Green Beret, Nate Boyer is a world traveler, philanthropist, community leader, and professional athlete as a former member of the Seattle Seahawks. As a Green Beret, he completed combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as Joint Combined Exchange Training Missions to Israel, Bulgaria and Greece. Nate was a member of the University of Texas football team for five years before playing in the NFL with the Seattle Seahawks. He is

co-founder and board president of MVP, which addresses the challenges that combat veterans and professional athletes face in transition once the uniform comes off. By connecting former combat veterans and professional athletes, MVP empowers these underserved men and women with a new team. MVP assists with their transition, promotes their personal development, and shows that they are not alone. Nate's belief that anything is possible has served him well throughout his life and has made him especially fit to speak about living with passion and purpose.



MIKE BROWN

UNBREAKABLE WEALTH

Mike Brown is an entrepreneur, investor and coach. He is a 2003 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he graduated in the top 90%. After commissioning and earning his wings, he served as an F/A-18F weapons systems officer until 2012, where he deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom aboard the USS Truman. After leaving the Navy, Mike co-founded, scaled and subsequently sold an eight-figure oil and gas investment firm, Palmares Energy. From there, he found his

calling in helping entrepreneurs have deeper conversations about freedom and purpose. Mike is passionate about serving fellow veterans and helping them thrive in their post-military life. He has invested in many veteran-led startups and supports numerous veteran-focused charities. He lives with his wife, Claire, and two children in the foothills of Morrison, CO. You can learn more and sign up for his newsletter at mbrown.co.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

HONOR LEVEL



VETERAN ENTREPRENEUR
INVESTMENT PROGRAM



COURAGE LEVEL



STRENGTH LEVEL



VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE

Veterans Business Battle began in 2015 with a goal of inspiring and encouraging our nation's military heroes to become successful entrepreneurs. Since its beginnings, more than \$5 million of investment offers have been extended to finalists. This year, the event includes seminars geared toward emerging entrepreneurs and a second round of pitches from the top five companies. The 16 semi-finalists selected come from across the country and all ranks and branches of the military.

VETERANS ASSOCIATION

The Rice Business Veterans Association was founded in 2011 and serves as an enduring mission for veterans in business to continue to serve and support their community. In a few short years, the number of veterans at Rice Business has grown from just a handful of veterans to over 10% veteran students enrolled in the MBA program. It was the students' drive and success that sparked the idea for the creation of the Veterans Business Battle's by several Houston entrepreneurs who were members of Entrepreneurs' Organization Houston. In addition to managing logistics for the event, Rice Business Veterans Association members, along with other Rice Business MBA students, serve as coaches to the semi-finalists to help prepare them for the competition.

MILITARY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Rice Business Military Scholars Program aims to attract the most talented veterans and enable them to transition smoothly from military service to a rewarding civilian career. Rice Business recognizes our obligation toward those who have served our country. The skills gained in the military – emotional intelligence, effective leadership, cultural sensitivity, and can-do attitudes – elevate the educational experience for all students. A Rice MBA degree equips veterans of this caliber to make extraordinary contributions to any organization they join.

FOUNDING MEMBERS



MARK MARTIN

Mark serves as the CEO of NetMass Inc., which he co-founded in 1998. He is an active equity investor across multiple industries, and in the last four years, Mark has led investment groups that invested over \$2.5 million in veteran-owned companies. With 25 years of experience as a real estate broker and developer, he has helped develop more than 4,000 homesites to date. Mark also currently serves as the COO for both Martin Realty & Land and Crystal Springs Water.



AL DANTO

Al is an entrepreneur who was a founding member of EO Houston. He is an active equity investor with Beachhead Investments, which focuses on veteran-owned businesses, and is also the managing partner of Exit Advisors which provides mergers and acquisition consulting and business valuation services. Al also is a professor at Rice University, where he teaches several courses in entrepreneurship.



ROGER JANIK

Roger is the founder and CEO of Fair Marketing, and continues his work as an entrepreneur and investor, with current investments in several industries. Roger serves on the board of directors of the Better Business Bureau and also runs his non-profit, The Search For Good Foundation.



CORBAN BATES

Corban is a former Army officer who helped found the Veterans Business Battle in order to provide greater opportunities for veteran entrepreneurs. During his tenure as president of Rice's Veterans in Business Association, he and his classmates continued the tradition of student leadership and participation that is vital to the long-term success of the Veterans Business Battle. After graduating, Corban followed his passion for investing and currently leads the venture capital and private equity investments for Vantage Partners.



MIKE TATZ

Mike is a former Army officer who was instrumental to the planning and preparation of the first Veterans Business Battle during his time as an MBA student at Rice University, when he was a member of Rice's Veterans in Business Association. With experience in private wealth management and sports marketing, Mike is the co-founder of Resilience CBD and is currently the executive vice president and COO of HK Enterprise.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Al Danto, Rice University

Jody James, Beachhead Investments

Asad Akram, KPMG, Army veteran

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM



KEN JACKSON

Chairman, Rice MBA '23
Army veteran



MIKE SCHNEIDER

Chairman, Rice MBA '23
Army veteran

Erin Germani, Board Member, Rice MBA '23

Allan Arroyo, Board Member, Rice MBA '23, Army veteran

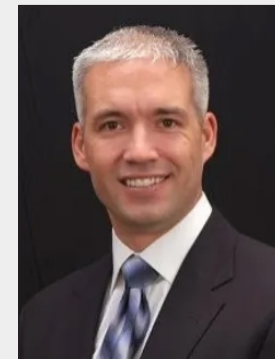
Will Alston, Board Member, Rice Executive MBA '23, Air Force veteran

Morgan Bellmor, Board Member, Rice MBA '23, Marine Corps veteran

Taylor Anne Adams, Board Member, Rice MBA '23


VET ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD


Chris Briley, Founder and President of Ride For Your Flag, Founder and CEO of Mustang Valley Concrete, Marine Corps veteran





Chris Briley graduated in 2005 from the University of Texas at Austin, McCombs School of Business, and subsequently received a commission in the United States Marine Corps. As a lieutenant, he served as a team leader in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. For his actions in Afghanistan, Chris was awarded multiple combat awards, including the Bronze Star with combat valor 'V' device, and the Purple Heart for injuries sustained. His performance and combat experience led him to be selected to become a combat warfighting instructor in Quantico, Virginia. After retiring from the Marine Corps in 2013, Chris returned to Texas and founded his own oil and gas firm – Briley Mineral Partners. The Briley Mineral Partners team successfully acquired more than \$60 million in oil and gas mineral rights. Today he is co-founder and CEO of Rushmore Minerals, a portfolio company for a Dallas-based private equity firm. He is also the president of Ride For Your Flag (RFYF), a veteran-focused 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Chris has three kids and splits time between Dallas and McAllen, Texas with his wife, Nataly. His hobbies include 3-gun shooting, bird hunting, race cars and motorcycles of all types. Chris is an avid adventurer, and it is his love of the outdoors and helping others that ultimately led to the creation of RFYF.


SEMI-FINALISTS

 Intellicare automates medical documentation using machine learning and artificial intelligence to increase efficiency and eliminate wasted time, allowing medical providers to spend more time on their patients. Whether it's through API or directly from the platform, our technology accurately identifies medical terms and captures conversations between physicians and their patients at the point of care. Through machine learning, Intellicare provides more accurate medical transcription on the front-end, which improves your workflow efficiency. Co-founder and CEO Omar Fuentes is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran.


 Arden's infrastructure-as-a-service enables legacy and blockchain-native content creators and IP holders to launch, distribute and manage engaging web3 experiences to audiences worldwide. Our solutions can incorporate blockchain either as a primary feature or as an additive element to an existing user experience, helping businesses and their customers navigate the path to web3 at their own pace. Co-founder Andrew Yeager is a U.S. Navy veteran.

 CarTwin is unlocking its value by creating an integrated data ecosystem to drive actionable insight and predictive analytics to address the automotive industry's most pressing challenges, such as efficient engine usage to cut costs and reduce carbon emissions. Our digital twin technology enables a variety of use cases by bridging the gap between the physical and digital realms. We provide real-time awareness of vehicle, component and manufacturing performance. CEO and co-founder Corey Thompson is a U.S. Navy veteran.


 Chiplytics is building automated and data-driven inspection tools for the semiconductor supply chain, making it easier for companies to screen and validate chips. Our platform acts as a modular toolkit where the operator can test and analyze any chip or create their own functional test using our API. Co-founder and President Stephen Dibartolomeo is a U.S. Navy veteran.

 Clifford Distilling LLC delivers premium, hand-crafted products that use time-tested, old-world practices carefully mixed with innovative ways of maturing and flavoring. We produce higher quality products that get to market in a shorter period, maximizing our sales effort while never compromising on quality. Founder Sean Clifford is a U.S. Army veteran.

 Designegy LLC is a product design company whose mission is to bring innovative solutions to the market and provide communities increased access to sustainable solutions. Designegy is launching its first product, Wanderer: a self-refilling water bottle that helps international travelers who are concerned with unsafe drinking water at their destination by providing a safe drinking water option that is easily portable, durable and reliable. Co-founder Ceciley Brinn is a U.S. Navy veteran.

 Dextral is using generative AI to drastically cut down on the manual contract proposal writing process that prevents the Department of Defense's \$140 billion annual procurement budget from reaching SMBs and startups. By using a product-based proposal writing tool, SMBs can more effortlessly bid on government business without needing expertise, and the cost-benefit analysis for whether to work with the DoD or not will tip in favor of yes. Co-founder Kevin Liu is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran.

SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

 Basin Boat Lighting produces a safety boat lighting system that incorporates all USCG required safety signaling tools in one all-inclusive, easy-to-use package. Our SmartBird™ line of safety lighting systems for boats and kayaks includes audible and visual USCG-required on-board distress signals in a user-friendly package, along with a choice of two super bright LED spot/flood lights. We are developing an emergency SOS app function that will share the boater's GPS location in the event of an accident. Founder Brian Signorelli is a U.S. Navy veteran.

 Filmocracy

 Martini Mates

 Native.

 NVIS

 Outmore Living

 P

 Phalanx

 Pretty Thai.

 Rannsak.com

Filmocracy hosts 200+ film festivals each year from all around the world. We provide the streaming, virtual conferencing and ticketing, all integrated into one solution. Our subscription gives consumers access to all of the events that we host. CEO Paul Jun is a U.S. Air Force veteran.

Martini Mates is standardizing the perfect pre-made espresso martini cocktail. Packaged in ready-to-drink 200 ml bottles and sold as a four-pack to consumers, the cocktail is spirit-based with premium vodka, saving consumers the hassle of creating cocktails from scratch while still getting premium mixologist quality to enjoy wherever they please. Founder Billy Wright is a U.S. Navy veteran.

Native has created the only platform that seamlessly integrates chat and translation and delivers best-in-class translations. Native's cloud-based translation services include the first multi-source translation engine and an AI-driven analysis engine to deliver the best available translation for every message with current support for 127 of the world's most used languages. We are also developing and patenting the first and only means for privacy in translated, real-time communications.

SaaS subscription product that makes networks invisible (invulnerable) to external cyberattacks via our Software Defined Perimeter (SDP). This makes us far superior to legacy Virtual Private Networks (VPN), which is the current solution, but can't keep up with the rising demand and attack surface that remote work brings. CEO Kyle Aquino is a U.S. Navy veteran.

Outmore Living is re-imagining the future of outdoor living by integrating technology to revolutionize the experience. We are on a mission to help people spend more time outdoors. The first way that we will do that is by building the world's first heated outdoor furniture. Co-founder Alex Duncan is a U.S. Army veteran.

Parlay Protocol is a B2B software-as-a-service focused on helping community banks identify, convert and retain invisible primes. Parlay gamifies the process of building financial wellness for credit invisible and credit unscorable consumers, helping to build and demonstrate healthy financial behaviors that can power wealth generation over time. Leveraging the insights from user activity in our platform, Parlay supplies data-driven insights to banks to help them get good deals faster than anyone else in the market. Founder Jay Long is a U.S. Army veteran.

Phalanx is a central hub where organizations can view and manage access control of their documents across their workforce, whether it is on their desktops or in the cloud, no matter where the employee is located. Phalanx combines automation, encryption and identity for a seamless data access experience designed for users without sacrificing productivity and follows Zero Trust data access principles to ensure only authorized users have access to sensitive files. Co-founder Ian Garrett is a U.S. Army veteran.

Pretty Thai® is a chef-driven line of specialty Thai products, focused on providing a restaurant quality experience to consumers in the comfort of their kitchen. We are a small, family founded and service-disabled veteran-owned certified small business. We provide one-of-a-kind products to elevate the culinary experience for all people, regardless of their cooking skills. We bring Thai flavors to your everyday meals, making for a unique, easy meal experience. CEO and co-founder Robert Strong is a U.S. Air Force veteran.

Rannsak is a Peer2Peer equipment rental marketplace for tools, outdoors equipment, party accessories and more. We are focused on creating a community that reduces spending, decreases consumption and increases sustainability. We are solving what some people might say is the greatest challenge in America: spending and buying. Rannsak will alleviate the need to buy new things. People can rent out equipment and try it before buying. President Patrick Sherman is a U.S. Army veteran.

MILITARY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

[BUSINESS.RICE.EDU/MSP](https://business.rice.edu/msp)



The [Military Scholars Program](https://business.rice.edu/msp) provides scholarships to cover tuition, fees and expected living expenses for selected veteran applicants who wish to pursue their educational dream of obtaining the Rice MBA degree. Visit business.rice.edu/msp to learn more or scan the QR code if you wish to give to this program.